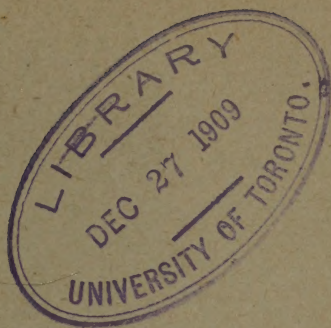
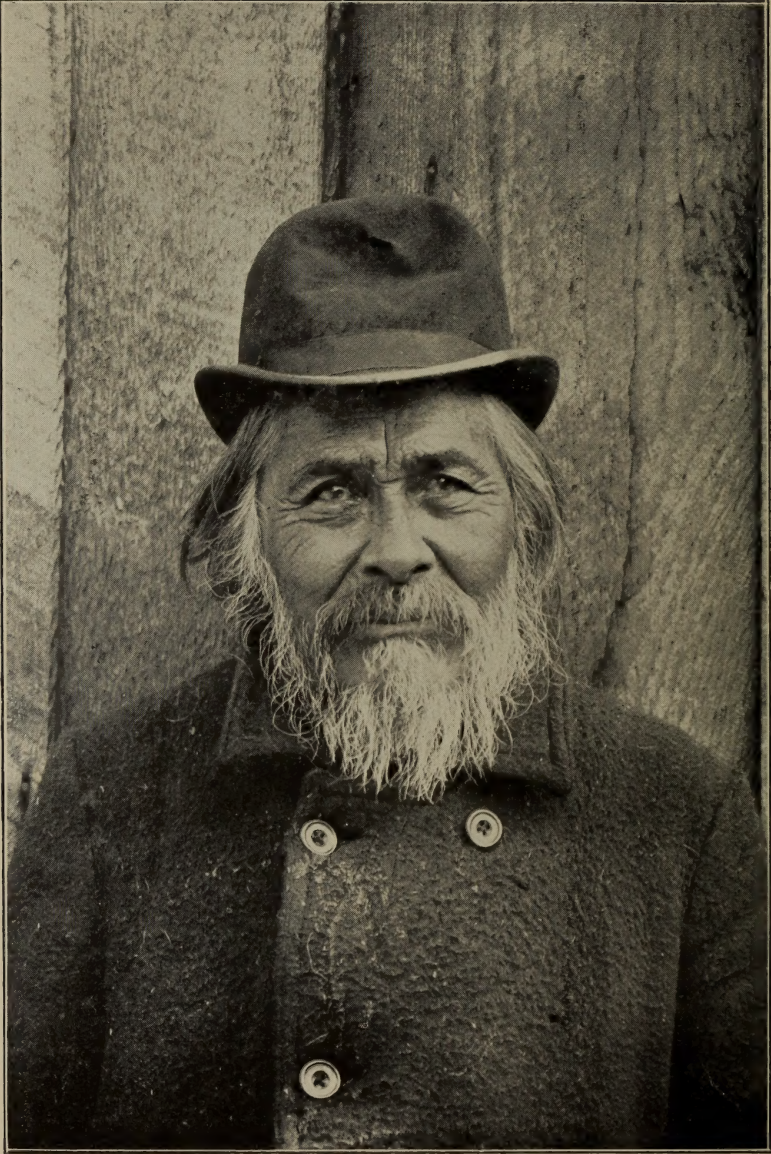


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The Nah'ane and their language.



A Nah'ane Medicine Man in Modern Costume.

THE NAH'ANE AND THEIR LANGUAGE.

BY THE REV. FATHER A. G. MORICE, O.M.I.

(Read 4th April, 1903.)

OF the twenty odd tribes which compose the great Déné family, few, if any, are so little known as the Nah'ane.

Many are the travellers who had passing references to them in the course of their writings, but exceedingly few are those who had as much as seen one of them. In fact, Dr. G. M. Dawson is the only author who can be said to have introduced them to us, and his information, fragmentary, and at times inexact as it is, is confined to the limits of a few pages.

Writers are not even agreed as to their very name as a tribe. Thus while Pilling in his valuable Bibliography of the Athapaskan Languages has adopted the spelling Nehawni, Kenticott calls them Nahawney; Ross writes their name Nehawney; Richardson changes this into Noh'hanne; MacKenzie dubs those he met Nathannas; Campbell and Dawson alternate between Nahanie and Nahaunie; others prefer Nahawnie, and Petitot himself never speaks of them but as the Na"anne, his " being the equivalent of my upper dot, which stands for the hiatus.

He derives that appellation from Nari'an-o'tine, "people of the West," but does not state from which dialect the word is borrowed. All the western Déné who know of that tribe, as well as its members themselves, pronounce it Nah'ane, and there can be no doubt that Petitot is correct in the meaning he ascribes to that term, whatever may be said of its derivation. For sunset or occident, the Tsilkotin say *nare'iN*, the Carriers *naanai*, the Tsé'kéhne *naren'oN*, and the Nah'ane themselves *naean*. The final e is expressive of personality and sometimes of plurality or collectivity.

On the other hand, Mr. J. W. MacKay¹ repeatedly calls the tribe Ku-na-na, the name given it by the Tlthinket, its neighbours in the south-west. But that he is somewhat mixed as to the ethnographical status of those Indians is shown by his remark that "the Ku-na-nas of the Stickine valley are closely allied to the Tlinkeets of that section,

¹ B.A.A.S. Tenth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada, p.p., 38-39.

i.e., the Skat-kwan.”¹ As a matter of fact, the latter are just as pure non-Déné as the former are undoubted Déné.

In common with all the Déné and many other aboriginal families, the Nah'ane recognize as their property no other vocable than Déné, “men,” though the branch of that tribe best known to me, the Thalhthan, will occasionally call themselves Tcitco'tinneh or “stick-people,” whereby they simply translate the name given them by outsiders, since, according to Dawson, and as I have myself ascertained, “the interior Indians are collectively known on the coast as ‘stick Indians.’”²

So much for the name of the tribe. Now as to its ethnographical status. This seems even more of a mystery to the few writers who have ever referred to it.

It is now over nine years since I stated myself that the Nah'ane “hunting grounds lie to the north of those of the Tsé'kéhne. But I am not familiar enough with their tribal divisions to state them with any degree of certainty, nor do I sufficiently possess their technology to speak authoritatively of it.”³

I am glad to be now in a position to say that, in the course of the present year, I have taken a trip to their chief village Thalhthan,⁴ in order to add as much as possible to my knowledge of that tribe and its language. I have succeeded in gathering besides the material for a grammatical compendium, quite a goodly little dictionary, and not a few texts in its dialect which I intend shortly to publish. Yet I must confess that we must still fall back, for the details of their frontiers and some other particulars, on what the late Dr. G. M. Dawson wrote of them in 1887—Notes on the Indian tribes of the . . . northern portion of British Columbia.⁵ Inaccurate as it is from a philological standpoint, his is the only account of the Western Nah'ane worth referring to.

1 Notes on the Indian Tribes of the Yukon District, etc., p. 2.

2 Tenth Report, p. 39, note.

3 Notes on the Western Dénés, Transactions Canadian Institute, Vol. IV., p. 31.

4 Most writers spell this word Tahltan, when they do not have it simply Taltan, and Dr. Boas corrects them by changing it into Ta'tltan. All sin through ignorance of the Déné phonetics and of the meaning of that word, which is a contraction of *Tha-sælhthan*, *tha*, the usual alteration of *thû*, water in compounds, and *sælhthan*, a verb which has reference to some heavy object lying therein.

5 Annual Report of Geological Survey of Canada.

I.

Broadly speaking the tribe consists of four main divisions. To my certain knowledge, its principal seat in the west is Thalhthan, a salmon fishery at the confluence with the Stickeen of a river of the same name, by about $58^{\circ} 2'$ of latitude north. From the new village in the immediate vicinity of that place, these aborigines radiate as far south as the Iskoot River, taking in all its tributaries and some of the northern sources of the Nass, and in the east to Dease Lake and part of the Dease River, extending also to all the northern tributaries of the Stickeen. Further north, we meet the Taku branch of the tribe, which claims "the whole drainage basin of the Taku River, together with the upper portions of the streams which flow northward to the Lewes, while on the east their hunting grounds extend to the Upper Liard River and include the valleys of the tributary streams which join that river from the westward."¹

The third division of the Nah'ane is the so-called Kaska, about whom much misapprehension seems to exist among the whites I met in the course of my journey, a misapprehension of which Dr. Dawson constituted himself the echo when he wrote: "The name Kaska is applied collectively to two tribes or bands occupying the country to the eastward of the Tahl-tan. I was unable to learn that this name is recognized by these Indians themselves, and it may be, as is often the case with names adopted by the whites, merely that by which they are known to some adjacent tribe. It is, however, a convenient designation for the group having a common dialect. This dialect is different from that of the Tahl-tan, but the two peoples are mutually intelligible, and to some extent intermarried."²

In the first place I must remark that Kaska is the name of no tribe or sub-tribe, but McDane Creek is called by the Nah'ane Kasha—the H representing a peculiar guttural-sibilant aspiration—and this is the real word which, corrupted into Cassiar by the whites, has, since a score of years or more, served to designate the whole mining region from the Coast Range to the Rocky Mountains, along, and particularly to the north of the Stickeen River.

All the whites who mentioned the subject to me concurred in Dawson's opinion that the so-called Kaskas form quite a different tribe, and in a footnote to the latter's essay, a Mr. Campbell goes even so far

¹ Notes on the . . . northern portion of British Columbia, p. 3.

² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

as to state that the "Nahanies of the mountains (who correspond to a subdivision of the Kaskas), are quite a different race from the Nahanies of the Stickeen (Tahl-tan)"¹ Now the Thalhthan Indians I questioned on the subject unanimously declared that those pretended foreigners spoke exactly the same language as themselves, with, of course, some local peculiarities. From a Kaska boy, with whom I travelled for a number of days, I ascertained that even such non-Déné words as '*kák*, paper, '*khukh*, box, '*kunts*, potatoes, which I thought proper to the Thalhthan Indians, who borrowed them from the coast, were the only ones current among his people to designate those objects.

The physique of the Kaska is somewhat different from that of the Thalhthan aborigines, inasmuch as I recognized in the former the thin lips and small, deeply sunk eyes of the Tsé'kéhne, while the latter resemble more the Carriers of the Coast Tlthinket, with whom from time immemorial they have more or less intermarried.

The sociology of the two divisions of the Nah'ane is as widely different, and their respective mode of life and social organization confirm my previous assertion in former papers that, to all practical purposes, the western Nah'ane are Carriers, while their eastern brethren are Tsekehne.

Another circumstance which has contributed not a little to the estrangement of the two tribal divisions, is the long-standing feuds arising out of difficulties concerning the hunting grounds, the making of slaves, and other causes. Even to this day the Kaska resent the Thalhthan's assumed or real superiority, and will not be confounded with them as co-members of the same tribe. Hence their declarations to the whites and the travellers' and traders' printed statements.

According to Dr. Dawson, the so-called Kaskas are sub-divided into the "Saze-oo-ti-na" and the "Ti-tsho-ti-na" and their habitat is in the neighbourhood of the Dease, Upper Liard and Black Rivers. His "Saz-oo-ti-na" may be Sas-otine or "Bear-People," while his Ti-tsho-ti-na's real name is no doubt Tihtco'tinne, or Grouse-People, an appellation which would seem to leave it open to discussion whether we have not in them rather the names of two different phratries or gentes than those of two genuine ethnical subdivisions of a tribe.

"Eastward they claim the country down the Liard to the site of old Fort Halkett, and northward roam to the head of a long river (probably

¹ Notes, etc., p. 10.

Smith River) which falls into the Liard near this place, also up the Upper Liard as far as Frances Lake."¹

This statement would seem to dispose of Petitot's Bad-People or *Mauvais-Monde*, a "very little known tribe," he says, "which used to trade at the now abandoned Fort Halkett to the number of 300 or 400 souls."²

Father Petitot furnishes us with our fourth division of the Nah'ane when he states that "a little band of 300 Na'annes (Déné) roam over the mountains of the MacKenzie. They are the Nathannas of Sir A. Mackenzie. We can add thereto the Etaottines of the Good Hope mountains, and the Espa-t'a-ottines of Fort des Liards in equal number."³

To the above certain divisions of the Nah'ane tribe, we should perhaps add the Ts'Ets'aut, an offshoot of some inland Déné, whom Dr. F. Boas discovered some years ago on Portland Inlet, on the Pacific Coast, somewhat to the southwest of the Nah'ane proper. That Dr. Boas would himself connect them with the Nah'ane tribe is apparent from the statement that "Levi (his informant) named three closely related tribes whose languages are different, though mutually intelligible; the Tahltan (Ta-tltan) of Stickeen and Iskoot Rivers, the Laq'uyip or Naqkyina, of the headwaters of the Stickeen, and the Ts'Ets'aut."⁴

This surmise is fully confirmed by Mr. MacKay, his annotator, who states that those Indians "belong to the Kunâna, a tribe which inhabits the lower Stickine valley and whose headquarters are at Tahltan."⁵

But here *scinduntur doctores*. According to Dr. Boas this handful of natives, which now consists of a mere dozen individuals, would have numbered about 500 souls sixty years ago, while Mr. MacKay has quite a different story to account for their separate existence as a tribe. He relates that, not more than forty years ago,⁶ three or four families hailing from Thalhthan in the course of their wanderings made for Chunah, on the sea coast, but took a wrong direction and struck on the west shore of Portland Channel, where they were practically forced to remain in a

¹ Notes, etc., p. 10.

² *Mémoire abrégé sur la Géographie de l' Athabaskaw-MacKensie*, p. 46.

³ *Ibid.* *ibid.*

⁴ Tenth Report, B.A.A.S., p. 34.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 38.

⁶ It is now eight years since both statements were published.

subject condition by the Tsimpsons, among whom they had unwittingly tumbled.¹

Be this as it may, the language of the Ts'ets'aut such as recorded by Dr. Boas himself, while it shows here and there undeniable traces of a Déné origin, has become so corrupt by the admixture of foreign terms and the alteration of its original lexicon, that the propriety of their being classified as Nah'ane is now quite problematical.

The population of the whole Nah'ane tribe must remain little more than a matter of guess. From the Iskoot, close to the Pacific, to the Mackenzie, across the Rocky Mountains, is indeed a broad stretch of land, and the very fact that it is so sparsely peopled renders it so much the more difficult to obtain anything like an exact computation of the tribesmen. I myself took some years ago a census of the Thalhthan village, and my figures were in the close vicinity of 190 souls. The population has since decreased, so let us call it 175.

From native sources I ascertained that the "Kaska were more numerous, perhaps 200. Petitot puts at 600 the number of the transmontane Nah'ane and allied subtribes. Allowing for the probable decrease and possible exaggeration, let us say 500. There remain the Taku, of whom I have no means of ascertaining the exact numbers. Probably 150 would be a conservative figure.

We thus obtain a total of 1,025, or in round numbers, 1,000 souls for the whole tribe, and I believe this is as fair an estimate of its population as could possibly be had at the present time.

As already stated, the eastern Nah'ane somewhat differ in physique from their western congeners, the only portion of the tribe with which I am familiar enough to describe it *de visu*. Their stature would be rather below than above the average, the maximum height being five feet eight inches. Their feet and hands are small and well shaped, and their head is round and not so large as that of the neighbouring

¹ In the course of his account of that adventure and the circumstances which lead to his getting acquainted therewith, Mr. McKay takes occasion to speak of an invasion by the Tsimpsonian of the territory which is now the Tsimpsonian peninsula, whereupon Dr. Boas remarks that "there is no traditional evidence of the invasion of the Tsimshian tribe to which Mr. McKay refers," adding that "it is probable that the Tsimshian were originally an inland people," two statements which, apparently difficult to reconcile as they at first appear, nevertheless are in no way conflicting. There may be no tradition of such an invasion among the Tsimpsonian, but their very name betrays their origin. The Skeena River is known to them as the *Ksièn*, and they call themselves *T'sëm-sièn*, people from the Skeena, or the river. To this day, anybody can see, two miles from Hazelton, on the Upper Skeena, a prairie or ancient townsite, where one can distinguish the cavities over which were built their winter subterranean houses. Now the name of the locality is *Tamlarh-am*, the beautiful place, in Tsimpsonian, and those two words are still used in that connection by the inland Kitson to the exclusion of any name in their own dialect.

Tlthinket. With them the nose, without being of the regular aquiline type, is not so squatty as among the Tsilhkoh'tin and other tribes. The lips are full, the eyes dark and not quite as large as is common with the Carriers. The forehead is low, broad and bulging immediately above the eyes. The hair is invariably black, coarse and straight.

Their beard is scanty, though a few, especially such as have taken to shaving—they are very progressive and great imitators—disport a fair quantity of dark, bristly facial hair.

As to their complexion, it varies considerably according to the individuals. Contrary to what I have noticed in other tribes, some of the eastern Nah'ane women have cheeks of a tinge which might almost be characterized as rosy, though the facies of others is quite swarthy.

All the adults above forty have the septum pendent and pierced through with a hole which held formerly a large silver ring, perhaps two inches in diameter. The leading men or notables wear likewise silver rings hanging from the lobes of the ear, and these are the only present remnants of the many ornaments which the helix was originally made to support.

Neither in blood, customs nor language are the western Nah'ane pure Déné. They are indebted to no small extent to the Tlthinket of Fort Wrangell for their present make-up. To them also they undoubtedly owe that lack of moral strength and force of character which has left them such an easy prey to the vices of unscrupulous white men. Very few are to-day the western Nah'ane who can be represented as bodily sane. Syphilis, a disease hardly known among the other Déné, is but too prevalent among them. Liquor is also slowly but surely killing them out.

I am bound to add, however, that adverse circumstances are a great deal to blame for the development of such pitiful results. Had missionaries established themselves among them before the rush of strangers to the Cassiar mines, the natives would not, in all probability, be the degraded beings they have become. Since the last few years, a representative of the Anglican Church has struck his tent on the arid hill of Thalhtan. But I am sure he could not well himself take exception to my statement that his influence has not been in the interest of temperance.

Though no other Déné that I know of have had to undergo the test of being left alone to wage their war against such a degraded foe as

a majority of the Cassiar miners have shown themselves to be, it is difficult for me to imagine for a moment, for instance, the Tsè'kèhne tribe sunk to the low moral level of the present Nah'ane whom I have met or have been told about.

While the eastern Nah'ane lead the simple patriarchal life of the Tsè'kèhne, with hardly any sign of a social organization, their western congeners, with the remarkable adaptiveness proper to the Déné race, have adopted practically all the customs and some of the mythology of their heterogeneous neighbours on the sea coast. Thus it is that matriarchate or mother-right is their fundamental law governing and regulating all inheritances to rank or property.

Though they have no totem poles, they know of the gentes, which at Thalthan are those of the Birds and of the Bears. Each of these have several headmen or *téné-thié* (the equivalent of the Carrier *tæneza*), who alone own the hunting grounds, and on festival occasions, such as dances or potlatching, are granted special consideration. These ceremonial banquets are much in vogue, and as a result, almost every house in Thalthan is now crowded with a quantity of trunks containing goods publicly received or to be likewise given away.

Those houses are now of rough unhewn logs, with stoves instead of fire-places. But the tribe's residences were originally much less elaborate, and consisted of brush shelters, sometimes with low walls made of long, slender poles. Therein they dwell, generally several related families together.

Marriage was never accompanied with any ceremony or formality. It seems to have been based principally on the bestowing of furs or other goods on the parents of the prospective bride.

Polygamy was known everywhere, but it is now practically abolished, the only exceptions being a very few cases among the present Kaska. As to divorce, it is obtained without any formality, and is often enough resorted to.

Shamanism was originally the only form of worship common to the whole tribe, and in the east witchcraft, and the social disturbances it entails seem even now quite prevalent. The Kaska boy I have already mentioned as a companion on part of my trip from Thalthan was just being taken away from revengeful fellow-tribesmen who had already done to death two of his brothers under the plea that their parents were responsible for the sickness and ultimate death of some Indian or

Indians against whom they were believed to have exercised their black art.

As among the other Déné, such deaths were the cause of family feuds of long duration and bitter hatred, when they did not lead to reprisals and a series of murders. Thus would originate their internecine wars, which consisted merely in ambuscades, surprises and massacres, accompanied sometimes with the enslaving of the women and the children.

But their "wars" were more frequently directed against foreigners, such as the Tsimpian of the upper Skeena, or against the Tlthinket of the coast. They had no war chiefs, or indeed any chief at all in our sense of the word.

In times of peace, their special avocation and means of subsistence are hunting and fishing, to which a few of the younger men add packing for the miners and the Hudson's Bay Company. As their territory is so extensive, it still abounds in fur-bearing animals and game of almost all descriptions. I found moose especially plentiful all over the country. The mountains are also rich in sheep and goats.

No wonder then, if the Nah'ane are well-to-do. In fact I consider that the western part of the tribe is at present dying on a golden bed. In the house of my hosts at the time of my visit were to be seen, besides gilt bronze bedsteads and laces of all kinds, two sewing machines, two large accordeons, and, will the reader believe it?—a phonograph! All this in the forests of British Columbia, north of the 58th degree of latitude!

Since I have mentioned death, I may remark that cremation was, until recently, the mode adopted by the western Nah'ane to dispose of their dead. And, in this connection, we have a ludicrous admixture of the new order of things with the olden ways, in the small travelling trunks bought from the whites, which are to be seen planted on two posts, in several places along the trails, and which contain some of the bones of the dead picked up from among the ashes of the funeral pile.

II.

As to the language of the Nah'ane, much might be said. I shall point out in the following pages only those particularities which are its exclusive property, and leave out most of the general features which are common to all the Déné dialects, and which the reader will find detailed

in my paper on "the Déné Languages,"¹ and in my forthcoming complete grammar of the Carrier language. Furthermore, all the following remarks shall apply more particularly to the idiom of the western Nah'ane, the only one I have ever studied.

Neglected by the ethnographers as the Nah'ane have remained to this day, their dialect has still been more of a *terra incognita* to the philologists. With not even the least grammatical note has it been honoured so far in all the linguistic literature at my command, and the only vocabulary by which it has ever been represented in scientific publications consists of the four columns of Thalhthan words printed by the late Dr. Dawson.²

And here I may be allowed to state that, after a careful study of their language, I have had the satisfaction of ascertaining that of all the corrections in the latter's vocabulary which I lately declared³ were demanded by the general rules of Déné phonetics and suggested by my knowledge of the other related dialects, not one have I found to be unwarranted.

Before going further I must also correct the one statement Dr. Dawson makes concerning their language. Speaking of the Thalhthan and Taku Nah'ane, he writes: "These Indians speak a language very similar to that of the Al-ta-tin, if not nearly identical with it, and so far as I have been able to learn, might almost be regarded as forming an extension of the same division. They appear to be less closely allied by language to the Kaska, with which people they are contiguous to the eastward."⁴

I have already done justice to the latter assertion. By Al-ta-tin, Dr. Dawson means the Lh'ta'tin, or "People of the beaver dams," as the Tsé'kéhne are called by the Carriers. His notion about the similarity of the two dialects I have found prevalent in other quarters. To prove its utter groundlessness, I need but reproduce here the Nah'ane and the Tsé'kéhne versions, for instance, of the doxology. Was the Chippewyan version available, I have no doubt that it would be found more alike to that of the Tsé'kéhne than to that of the Nah'ane. Grammatically speaking, there is more affinity between the Tsé'kéhne and the Chippewyan—two very distinct tribes—than between the Tsé'kéhne and the Nah'ane.

¹ Transactions Canadian Institute, Vol. 1.

² Notes on the northern portion of British Columbia, p. 19, *et seq.*

³ Transactions Canadian Institute, Vol. VI., pp. 99-100.

⁴ Notes, etc., p. 2.

THE DOXOLOGY.

IN NAH'ANE.

Séesôga Ætha' 'ka'tcéh, Ætcimé'
ka'tcéh, Ahtige-Ti 'ka'tcéh hut'sihkahtin.

Lhann kastséh tûda ahîh'té la, tû'gu
'ka'tcéh, ue'té 'kacéh, ét'tha ta'da cētû
wotôzite a'téh éyéne 'ka'tcéh hu'karo'té ni.

IN TSÉ'KÉHNE.

Utqon Ætha' qûh, Ætcwinh qûh,
Yétqire-Inqî qûh ut'sœrhautœz.

Sé rhasséh tarhît'qé ille a, qû qûh,
awuz'on qûh int'lhon qé ta ussé utœtûzit
e'tah éyétcœ qûh hahut'qé.

To start with the sounds as such, I will remark that the following desinential letters or groups of letters are never found in Carrier or Chilcotin, but are quite common in Nah'ane: *c*, *ts*, *tc*, *tlh*, *klh*, to which we must add the medial *-slh-*, as in *aslhé*, I make, and *-srh-*, as in *etisrhuh*, I snore. Final *ts* occurs often enough in Babine, and final *tc* is as frequent in Tsé'kéhne, but the other compounds are never found even in those idioms.

On the other hand the letter *m*, which sometimes terminates a word in Carrier, never occupies that position in Nah'ane. We should not forget either to notice that the double letter *tj* or *dj*, which is so frequent in Kut'chin appears also in Nah'ane to the exclusion of all the other Déné dialects.

Some Carrier letters have their fixed equivalents in Nah'ane. Thus the Carrier initial *n* is often replaced by *t* in Nah'ane. Ex.: *ni*, mind, Nah'ane, *ti*: *na*, eye, Nah'ane, *ta*: *aunilh*, purposedly, Nah'ane, *atilh*; *dûni*, he will say, Nah'ane, *dûti*. The initial *p* of many Carrier words becomes *m* in Nah'ane (as well as in Tsé'kéhne), and we have *pæn*, lake, in Carrier, but *men'* in Nah'ane; *thapa*, shore, in Carrier, *thama* in Nah'ane; *pæ-*, his, in Carrier and *me-* in Nah'ane.

A Nah'ane sound, which I have found in no other Déné idiom is that which I render by *H*. It is a kind of a guttural aspiration, much more pronounced than that of the common *n*. Its equivalent in the other dialects is *rh*, or the Greek *rho*, and in the possessive case, it is inflected into a soft *r*. Ex.: *His*, *pûs*; possessive, *me-rize*, his pus.

The first particularity which strikes a Déné scholar in his study of the Western Nah'ane, is the presence therein of a regular accent, something quite unknown in all the northern Déné dialects. I have no doubt that the intercourse of that subtribe with the Tlinket of Fort Wrangell is responsible for that feature of its language. This accent has for effect, not only to lengthen the syllable it affects, but even to raise the pitch of the voice when the accented syllable is pronounced. Thus it often falls on monosyllables. Gun is *d'na* (a Tlinket word) in Nah'ane; *kussa'*

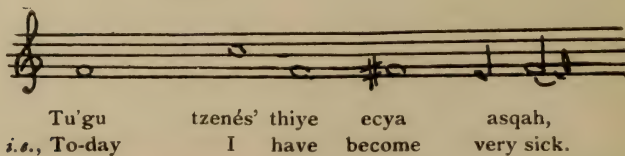
means, "I do not know" in the same dialect. Much stress must be laid on the *u* of the first word and on the *sa* of the last, otherwise neither would be understood.

On the other hand the voice must also be raised with a sort of constrained effort when one pronounces the words 'khon', fire, *nehn'*, land, *tzé*, gum, etc., though many other monosyllables lack this distinguishing feature.

In this connection I must not fail to record what, to a student of the Carrier idiom, seems something of an anomaly. In my "Notes on the Western Dénés,"¹ I wrote some years ago: "In these nouns there is generally one syllable which is more important and contains, as it were, the quintessence of the word. Thus it is with the *ne* of *tæne*. . . . In composite words such syllables only are retained.

Now it happens that in Nah'ane the accent falls precisely on the first syllable of that word (which means "man" in all the dialects), and not on the second, which is hardly audible when pronounced by a native. In the same way, instead of using only the second half of the word, as is usual with the Carriers and the Chilcotin when they refer to the human body or to any part thereof, as in *ne-yæs'te*, human body; *ne-na*, human eyes; *ne-t'siltcæn*, human neck, etc., a Nah'ane will always utter the whole word, giving particular prominence to its first part, and say, for the same objects, *tèn'e-ri*, *tèn'e-ta*, *tèn'e-kwos*, which the careless listener will most probably take for *tèn'ri*, *tèn'ta*, etc.

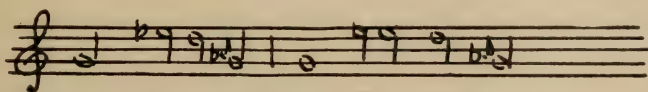
Beside their accent, the Nah'ane have, when speaking, a particularly marked intonation. This is so pronounced that it could almost be compared to a song. In fact, I have noticed the following modulation as being of very frequent occurrence. Its finale especially is hardly ever omitted.



Students of native languages must have noticed that most tribes or portions of tribes have their own peculiar way of singing out, as it were, the sentences of their respective idioms. When there is nothing in their elocution which can be compared to a song, the finale, at least, is almost certain to stray out of the *recto tono*. So the ending of each Shushwap sentence is infallibly from G to upper C, while the Coast Salish, or at

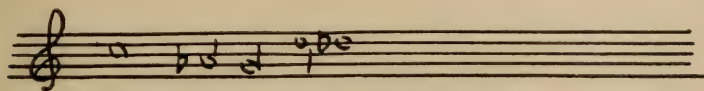
least the Sicalh, content themselves with raising the voice from G to A, or one full tone.

The intonation of the Carriers varies too much according to the different groups of villages to be recorded here. I will choose but one, which is characteristic of the Hwozahne, or people of Stony Creek.



Ntœn lœœtœni, au t'sœtœst'sœk ;
i.e., What does he say, we don't understand him.

The elocution of the Chilcotin and of the Tsé'kéhne is more uniform. Any member of the former tribe would, I think, easily recognize the following sentence, which they are ever ready to utter when anything is asked of them which they are not disposed to grant.



Tla kan'te kule ; i.e., There is none.

But to return to our Nah'ane dialect. From a terminological point of view, it has all the appearances of an eclectic language. Indeed, I would fain compare it to English, as it occupies to some extent, with regard to the other Déné dialects, the position held by that language relatively to the European idioms. Its vocabulary furnishes us, besides fully forty nouns,¹ which are more or less Tlthinket, several terms which duly belong respectively to the Kutchin, the Hare and the Chippewayan dialects. Here are a few examples. Kutchin: *djugu*, now, Nah'ane, *tugu* ; *lhaon*, quite, Nah'ane, *lhan* ; *ækwæt*, knee, Nah'ane, *ekwæt* ; Hare *due*, no, Nah'ane, *tueh* ; *guntie*, elder brother, Nah'ane, *etiye* ; Chippe- wayan: *sorha*, well ; Nahane, *sôga* ; *esdan*, I drink, for which the Nah'ane have an absolutely homonymous synonym.

Even the Tsimpsian has lent them one word, *lelk*, to designate the snake, a reptile which is not found within Nah'ane territory. A few words of English have also crept into the Nah'ane vocabulary, and it is worthy of remark that whenever an *l* occurs in them, the Nah'ane have

¹ I may here draw the reader's attention to the fact that a people of a low mental standard, a nation of uncultivated intellects, may borrow many unchangeable words from the vocabulary of its heterogeneous neighbours, but will never attempt to appropriate verbs. The former they will leave in their original form, or allow them through neglect or ignorance to slowly degenerate into more or less different terms ; but when it is a question of verbs, the low type intellect is not up to the task of adapting them to the exigencies of its grammar. In other words it cannot digest and assimilate them.

altered it into an *n*. Thus for gold, they say *gon* ; for silk, *sink* ; for dollar, *dana*. The word *kas* for barrel they owe to the Tlthinket, who had themselves borrowed it from the English speaking skippers and traders (*kas* = cask).

Chinook has contributed *masmas* (a corruption of *musmus*), cattle, and probably *kimdan* (for *kiutan*), horse. Following the example of the coast Indians, the Nah'ane have likewise changed the Chinook for cat, *pus*, into *tuc*.

At times this propensity for appropriating foreign terms leads to curiously hybrid compound words. For instance, the Nah'ane equivalent of organ is half Tlthinket and half Déné. All the Déné call that instrument a "paper that sings." As the Nah'ane had already borrowed the Tlthinket word *'kúk* for paper, and on the other hand, as they did not know or could not use the Tlthinket synonym for "sings," they unscrupulously retained the first vocable to which they added their own equivalent for the verb and said *'kúk-etqine*.

The dictionary may be regarded as a thermometer which faithfully registers a people's status and chief avocation. Its readings are seldom at variance with fact, and when it records, for instance, a multitude of fish names or, still better, when it possesses several names for the same fish according to its age or condition, it will inevitably denote a nation of fishermen. In like manner the sociological status of our Nah'ane is betrayed by their vocabulary, which abounds in fine distinctions for the names of the larger animals on which they mainly subsist.

I will take but one example to illustrate my meaning. With them the generic name of the marmot is *tætiyé*, and the female is called *hosthelh*, while the name is known as *oet'getha*. A little marmot in general is named *oe'kane*, or *usthe-tsetle*. But if it is only one year old it goes as *usaze* ; the next year it will be known as *oekhutze*, and when in its third year, it will be called *tætiyé-tucitze*. And note that all of those eight words apply to only one kind of animal, since there is another term to denote the smaller variety of marmot (*arctomys monax*).

We have therefore our Nah'ane stamped by their very vocabulary as a people of trappers and huntsmen, and the abundance of their terms for a mountain animal furthermore sheds a good ray of light on the topography of their country.

Another reliable indicator of a primitive people's main occupations, to which it adds a valuable hint at the nature and climate of its land, is

the calendar. Subjoined is that in use among the western Nah'ane, and the careful student of Americana will perhaps find it worth his while to compare it with those of the Carriers and of the Tsé'kéhne published in my "Notes on the Western Déné."¹ Of course, all the months therein recorded are lunar months, and coincide but imperfectly with our own artificial divisions of the year.

January, *sa-t'séslhie*, moon of the middle (of the year).

February, *tænon-thene*, the snow is a little frozen over.

March, *iht'si-sa*, moon of the wind.

April, *tlhi-pænetsé-e*, the dog uses to bark.

May, *ih'aze-sa*, moon when all the animals leave their winter retreats.

June, *æyaz-e-sa*, moon of the little ones (when animals have their young.

July, *ætcitc-e-sa*, moon when they moult.

August, *tí'ka-e-sa*, moon when they fatten.

September, *hosthelh-e-sa*, moon of the female marmot.

October, *mæn-then-tsetle*, moon of the small ice.

November, *mæn-then-tco*, moon of the big ice.

December, *kærh-urwoesse*, the rabbit gnaws.

We have tarried so long over the sounds and substantives of the Nah'ane language that our remarks on the other parts of speech must necessarily be brief.

In its numerals we find a confirmation of what I said some time ago when I wrote, speaking of the roots of languages in general: "The numerals and the pronouns . . . generally have a kind of family air in cognate dialects. As to the pronouns, I think that hardly any qualificative reservation is necessary, but it is not so with all the numerals."² Of the ten Nah'ane numbers, only three (one, *lhige*, Carrier, *ilho*; three, *thad'é téh*, Carrier, *tha*; and five, *lholla*, Carrier, *kwollai*) have any affinity with the Carrier, Babine, Chilcotin or even Tsé'kéhne numerals. The other seven have not the faintest resemblance thereto.

A peculiarity worth recording in this connection is the fact that the numbers two, three and four are in Nah'ane perfectly regular verbs which are conjugated with persons—plural, of course—and tenses. Let us take, for instance, the number three, *thad'é téh*. We have at our disposal any of the words of the following conjugation :

¹ Transactions Canadian Institute, Vol. IV., p. 106.

² The Use and Abuse of Philology, Transactions Canadian Institute, Vol. VI., p. 92.

PRESENT.

tha-desê téh, we are three
tha-dah' téh, you are three
tha-hide' téh, they are three

PAST.

tha-desê' téé, we were three
tha-dah' téé, you were three
tha-hide' téé, they were three

PROXIMATE FUTURE.

tha-dê' tilh, we are going to be three
tha-dah' tilh, you are going to be three
tha-hædê' tilh, they are going to be three

EVENTUAL FUTURE.

tha-dû' téé sa, we will be three
tha-dah' téé sa, you will be three
tha-hædû' téé sa, they will be three

In all these words the main root for three is, of course, *tha*. Yet *thadesê' téh*, etc., are single words whose neither first nor last component parts can be used separately.

The only approach to these conjugable numerals I know of is to be found in the speech of a small portion of the Carrier tribe. It is restricted to the number two, *natne*, which becomes *nat'soetne*, we are two (persons), *nahtne*, you are two, etc. I should not forget, however, a peculiar set of numerals for which I find no more appropriate qualificative than the epithet "inclusive." These not only have in Carrier all the persons and tenses of the above, but they are even modified so as to form a separate class of adverbial numerals. Here are a few examples: *na-t' sæl' torh*, both of us;¹ *na-nel' torh*, both of us; *na-nælh' torh*, both of you; *na-rhæl' torh*, both of them.

The following are impersonal verbs: *na-hwul' torh*, both times; *na-hwothil' torh*, it is going to be both times, etc.; *tha-hwul' torh*, all of the three times; *tê-hwul' torh*, all of the four times, etc.

All these forms, tenses or persons can be applied in Carrier to all the numerals of that class, except the first, the ninth and the tenth, and in this respect, as in so many others, that language surpasses in richness all the other Déné dialects.

The Nah'ane lacks an equivalent for the personal plural particle *ne*, which the Carriers suffix to the verb when in English we make use of the demonstrative and relative pronouns "those who," as in *hwot'sit-ne*, "those who lie," the liars. Instead of this, the Nah'ane will say, by a curiously abnormal commingling of a plural pronoun with the corresponding singular verb: "he-lies they," *tse'sit oekhune*. This renders speech unnecessarily long and rather unwieldy.

¹ With an idea of impersonality, which it is impossible to express in English, and which is absent in *nanel' torh*.



Nabrane Women in Dancing Costume.

A feature of the possessive pronouns which the Nah'ane shares with some related idioms is the absence of a term for the second person of the plural. Most of the eastern Déné dialects even lack altogether the same person of the personal pronouns, but the Nah'ane are not so verbally destitute. In their minds, however, there lurks some vague confusion about the difference between the first and the second person plural of those pronouns which, at times, does not seem to be fully grasped.

In common with those of the other Déné dialects, the Nah'ane verbs are rich in persons, some, like the verbs of station and the verbs of locomotion, having as many as eighteen for each tense, as against the twenty-one their Carrier equivalents boast of. In the face of that relative richness it is somewhat of a surprise to find that the regular or common verbs have not even a single person representing the dual, which is rendered, as with us, by the plural, while even the Carrier, which is rather deficient in that respect, possesses, at least, the first person dual for all the verbs.

A point of resemblance with the eastern dialects is the plural of some Nah'ane verbs, which is formed by the incorporation of the particle *da*, without any alteration of the desinential syllable. Thus, until we come to the plural, the conjugation of the verb *t'sé-mészit*, I wake up, is practically that of its Carrier equivalent. But after this, the similarity is confined to the main or initial root, which, through all tenses and with any person, remains invariable in all the dialects. The following partial conjugation of the present of the above mentioned verb will illustrate my remark :

CARRIER.	NAH'ANE.
Dual.— <i>t'se-nítzit</i> , we wake up, both of us.	Dual.— <i>t'se-nítzit</i> .
<i>t'se-nàhazit</i> , you wake up, both of you.	<i>t'se-nàhazit</i> .
<i>t'se-rhènzit</i> , they wake up, both of them.	<i>t'se-hènzit</i> .
Plural.— <i>t'se-t'sèntilh</i> , we wake up.	Plural.— <i>t'sé-dasítzit</i> .
<i>t'se-nàhtilh</i> , you wake up.	<i>t'sé-dàhazit</i> .
<i>t'se-rhèntilh</i> , they wake up.	<i>t'sé-dàhezit</i> .

Another most important point of resemblance of the Nah'ane with the eastern Déné dialects, is the utter absence in the former of any special negative form. This particularity may be said to constitute its fundamental difference from the Carrier, Babine and Chilcotin idioms, the verbs of which are distinguished by at least one, and frequently two or even three syllabic inflections in addition to the negative particle.

Instead of this the Nahane set that particle before the verb, which remains under its affirmative or normal form.

To sum up. The Nahane language is much less complicated and verbally poorer than the Carrier. It is also less pure in its lexicon, more embarrassed in its phraseology, and owing to its accent, even more delicate in its phonetics.

